

McFarland Gap Road, Culvert

HAER No. GA-88-A

McFarland Gap Road

Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park Roads & Bridges

Ft. Oglethorpe

Walker County

Georgia

HAER

GA

24-FOOG,

1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record

National Park Service

Southeast Region

Department of the Interior

Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

McFARLAND GAP ROAD, CULVERT

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24-FOOG.  
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Location: McFarland Gap Road over an unnamed tributary in Walker County, Georgia

U.S.G.S. Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia 7.5 Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:

Zone: 16  
Easting: 657,680  
Northing: 3,867,630

Present Owner: United States Government

Present Use: Roadway crossing

Significance: While Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park exhibits historic significance in several areas, the McFarland Gap Road Culvert represents the earliest road building effort by park officials as well as late nineteenth century road building techniques. Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park's other areas of historical significance include conservation, sculpture, and military.

PART I. PHYSICAL SETTING OF THE SITE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO  
THE SURROUNDING ENVIRONMENT

McFarland Gap Road culvert is a double box culvert located on McFarland Gap Road spanning an unnamed tributary in Walker County, Georgia. It is located in the northwest portion of Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park.

PART II. HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE SITE

While Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park exhibits historic significance in several areas, the McFarland Gap Road Culvert represents the earliest road building effort by park officials as well as late nineteenth century road building techniques.

Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park's other areas of historical significance include conservation, sculpture, and military.

The park is significant in the area of conservation since it is the first American battlefield whose preservation was authorized by Congress and where veterans of both armies actively participated in the park's creation and development.

The park also is significant for its sculpture for its 600 plus monuments which represent an impressive collection of sculpture and monumentation from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Chickamauga battlefield has 460 of these monuments ranging in size from the Wilder tower, over 80 feet tall with an interior stairway, and the Georgia Monument, 87 feet tall topped by a bronze figure, to the small stone markers and plaque tablets.

In addition, the park is significant for its military association since the Chattanooga Campaign, which occurred during the fall of 1863 and resulted in an overall Union victory, was significant in that it exhibited some of the most remarkable military maneuvers and strategies during the Civil War. It also was a significant turning point in the war. With the Union's victory in Chattanooga, the control of all the railroads in the city was secured. Control of the railroads provided the Union army access to the Deep South, thereby laying the groundwork for Sherman's Atlanta Campaign, his March to the Sea and the ultimate

fall of the Confederacy.

The Battle of Chickamauga is significant in the overall context of the Chattanooga Campaign as being the first engagement. The battle itself, one of the last major Confederate victories, is significant since it involved a different kind of warfare than had been experienced on other battlefields of the Civil War. The densely forested terrain of the area impaired soldier visibility, resulting in close range and hand-to-hand fighting. This dense vegetation also impaired the chain of command causing troops to act without officer leadership and thus giving the Chickamauga battle the name of "soldier's battle." Military tactics employed during the battle, such as the breakdown of the large army into squads and platoons, and the use of breastworks and repeating rifles, became important in later wars.

### PART III. HISTORY OF THE SITE

The Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park commemorates several Civil War battles fought in northwest Georgia and southeast Tennessee during September and November 1863. In 1888, a Veterans Officer's group, the Society of the Army of the Cumberland, proposed that both Union and Confederate veterans become involved in the project. The only other national battlefield preserved at this time was in Gettysburg and its monuments all commemorated Union efforts. A year later, the Joint Chickamauga Memorial Association organized to petition Congress. By 1890, the House Committee on Military Affairs approved the bill whose stated goal was to obtain approximately 7,600 acres through condemnation procedures; approach roads were to be ceded to the Federal government by Georgia and Tennessee. [The park owned all of McFarland Gap Road to McFarland Gap until the 1920s when the park disposed of approach roads.] Congress appropriated \$125,000 to establish the park. Land acquisition began in 1891; by October 1892 all but 1,000 acres had been acquired. In addition to land acquisition, during this time, park commissioners focused on the laying out and construction of roads. Roads present in 1863 were located and re-opened. An October 1891 plat of the park shows the proposed improvements to McFarland Gap Road. By 1900, most park roads had been completed.

The concept of national historic parks and historic preservation began with the founding of the Chickamauga

and Chattanooga National Military Park. Founders envisioned the park as a "theater for learning" and not as a recreational arena.

PART IV. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The McFarland Gap Culvert is located on a two lane road in the northwestern portion of the park. The area continues to be wooded.

The limestone faced double 5 by 3 box culvert displays two segmental arches clad in coursed ashlar stone. According to the park historian, Jim Ogden, the stone was quarried locally. Limestone was used extensively during the early road construction in the park with many culverts faced with it. The park also had drainage ditches lined in limestone. The drainage ditches existed until the early 1980s.